

Public Comments and Idea Gathering for the North Common



Town of Amherst
April 1, 2014



North Common



Property Map

Property Lines

Easements

Base Map

Trails

Streets

Local Roads

Major Roads

State Routes

DOT Roads

Unimproved Access Highway

Multi-lane Hwy, not S

Other Numbered Hwy

Major Road, Collector

Minor Road, Arterial

Horizontal Datum: MA Stateplane Coordinate System,

Zone 4151, Datum NAD83, Feet

Vertical Datum: NAVD83, Feet

Planimetric & topographic base map features compiled

at 1"=40' scale from April, 2006 Aerial Photography.

Parcels compiled to match the base map;

revisions are ongoing.

The information depicted on this map is for planning purposes only. It may not be adequate for legal boundary definition, regulatory interpretation, or property conveyance purposes. Utility structures and underground utility locations are approximate and require field verification.

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1" = 50 ft



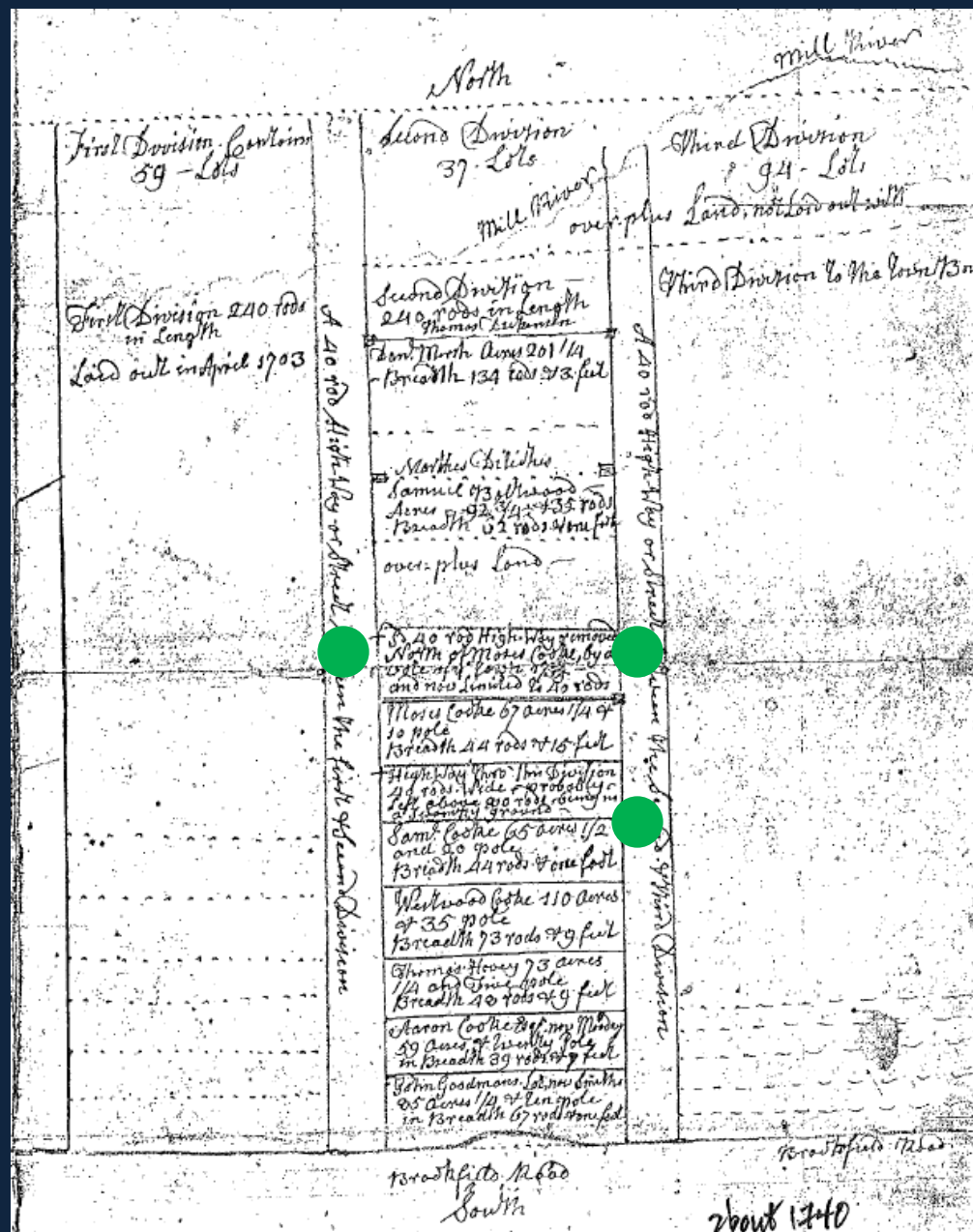
Purpose of public meeting and process moving forward

- Review current conditions of the Common
 - Historic site, including WCTU Fountain
 - Areas of poor drainage and no turf
 - Lack of accessibility
 - Limited pedestrian paths, seating, lighting and gathering spaces
 - Important space for Town Center
 - Public shade trees
- Comments on Concepts to develop themes for future design
 - Two concept plans
- Town may apply for funding for design and construction
 - PARC Grant Program

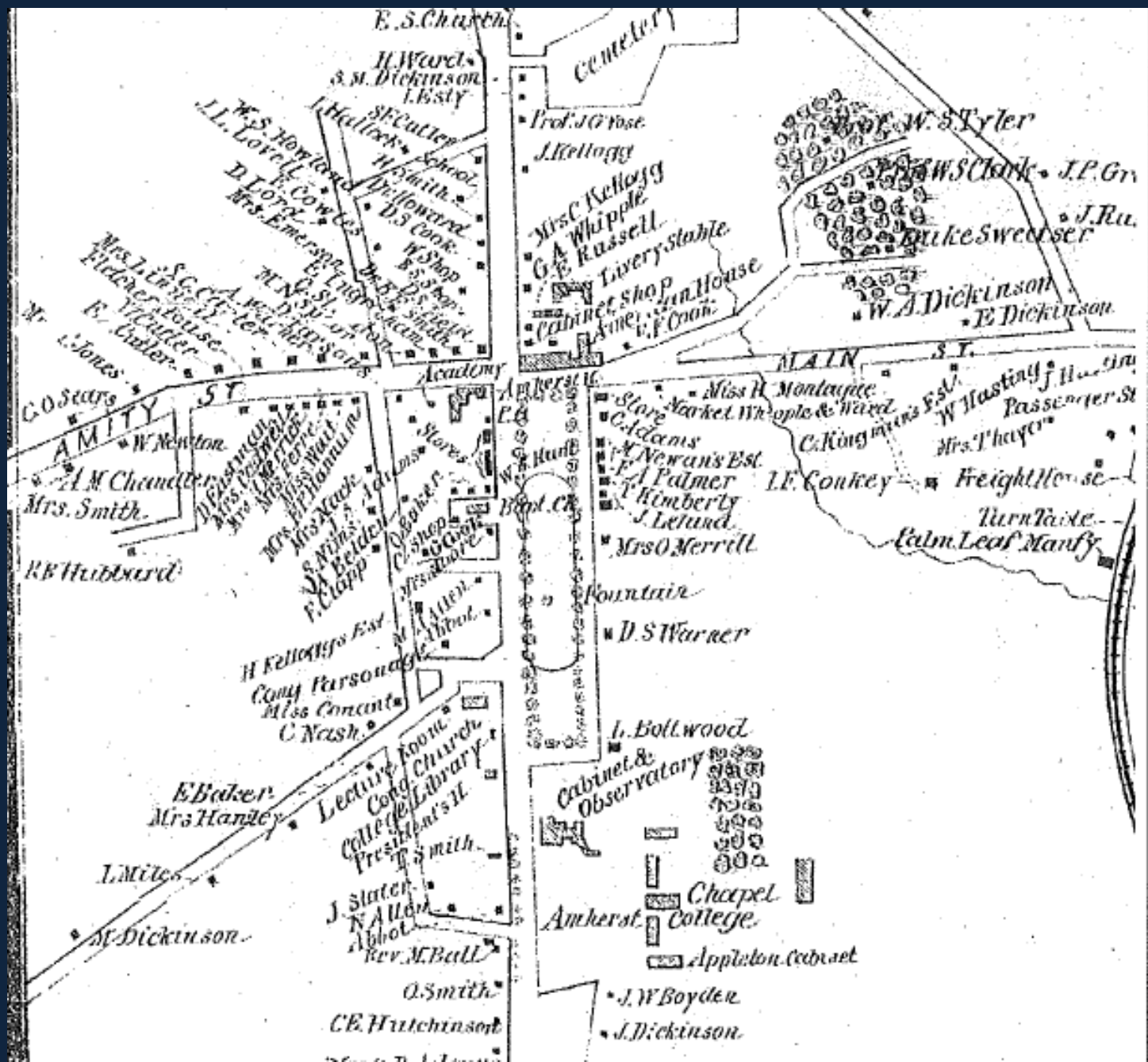
History of the Town Common

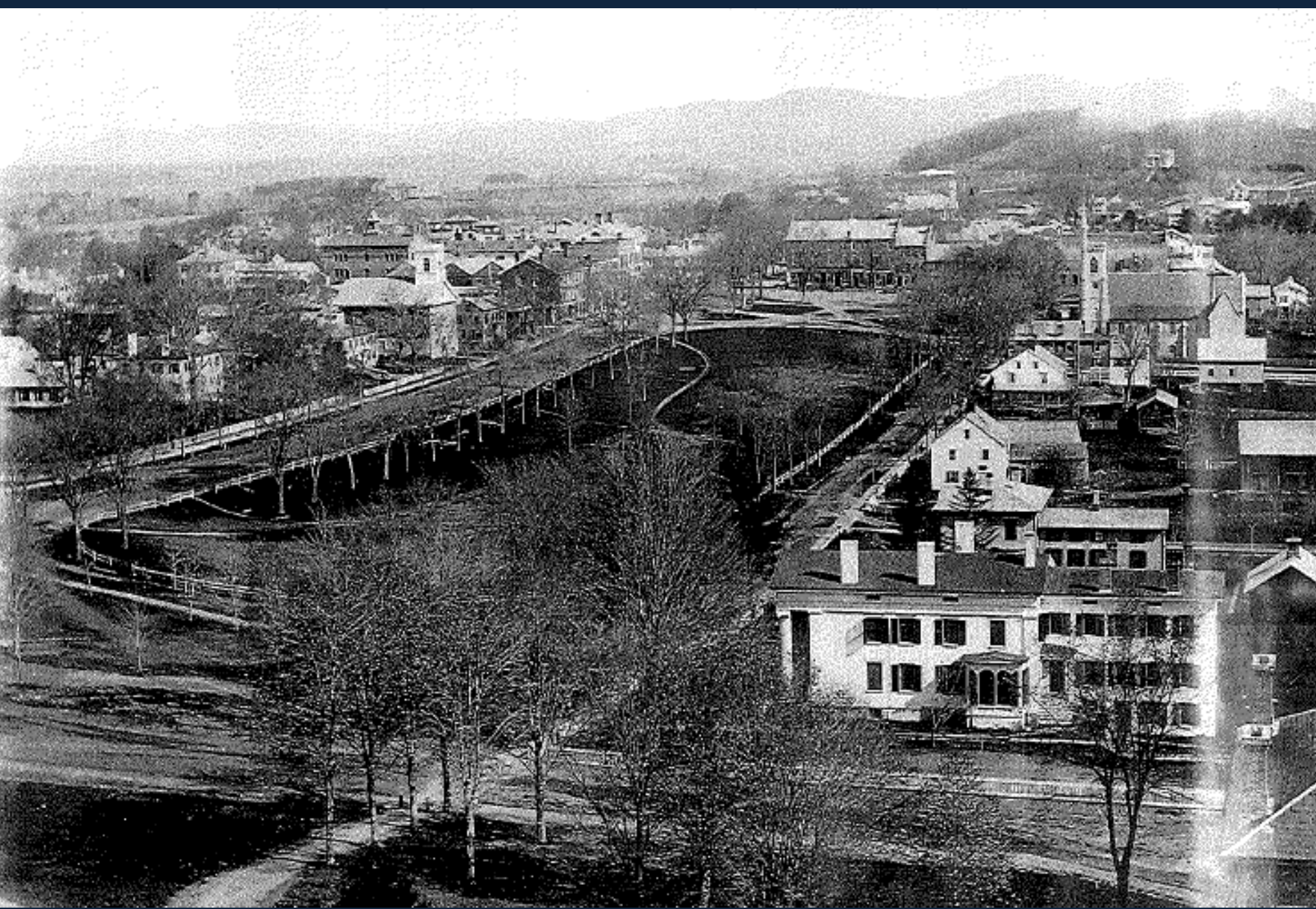
- Town Common is as old as Amherst
- Town Common is part of the road right of way and is not a piece of property
- Amherst Select Board has jurisdiction over the Town Common
- Many boards and committees are involved with maintenance and planning of the Common
- It is an original historic common, not a park, used for civic events and communal uses and gatherings
- The Town Common has been continually redesigned over the years to accommodate changing public needs

Ca. 1740 Map-Original Layout of Common From Bay Road to Mill River in North Amherst

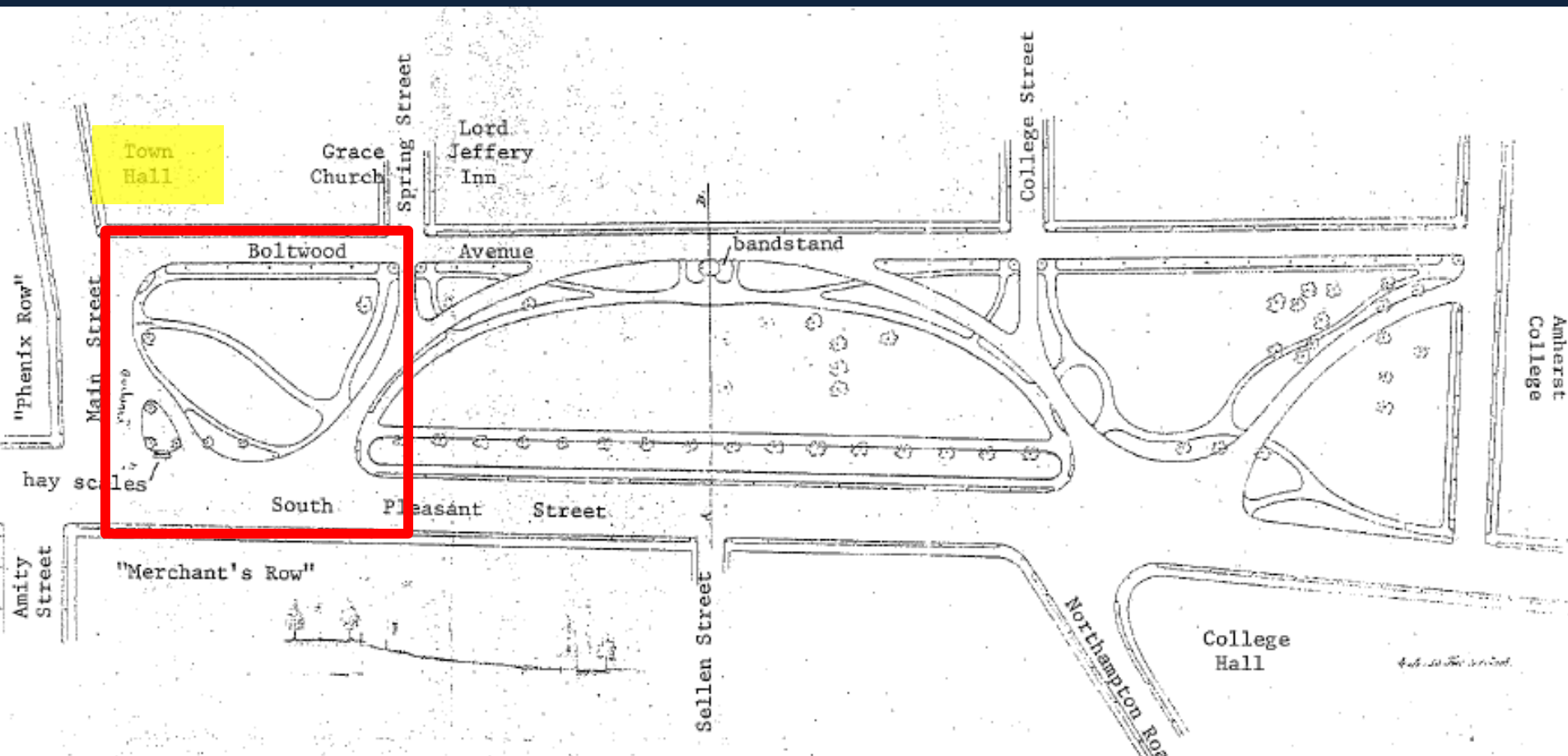


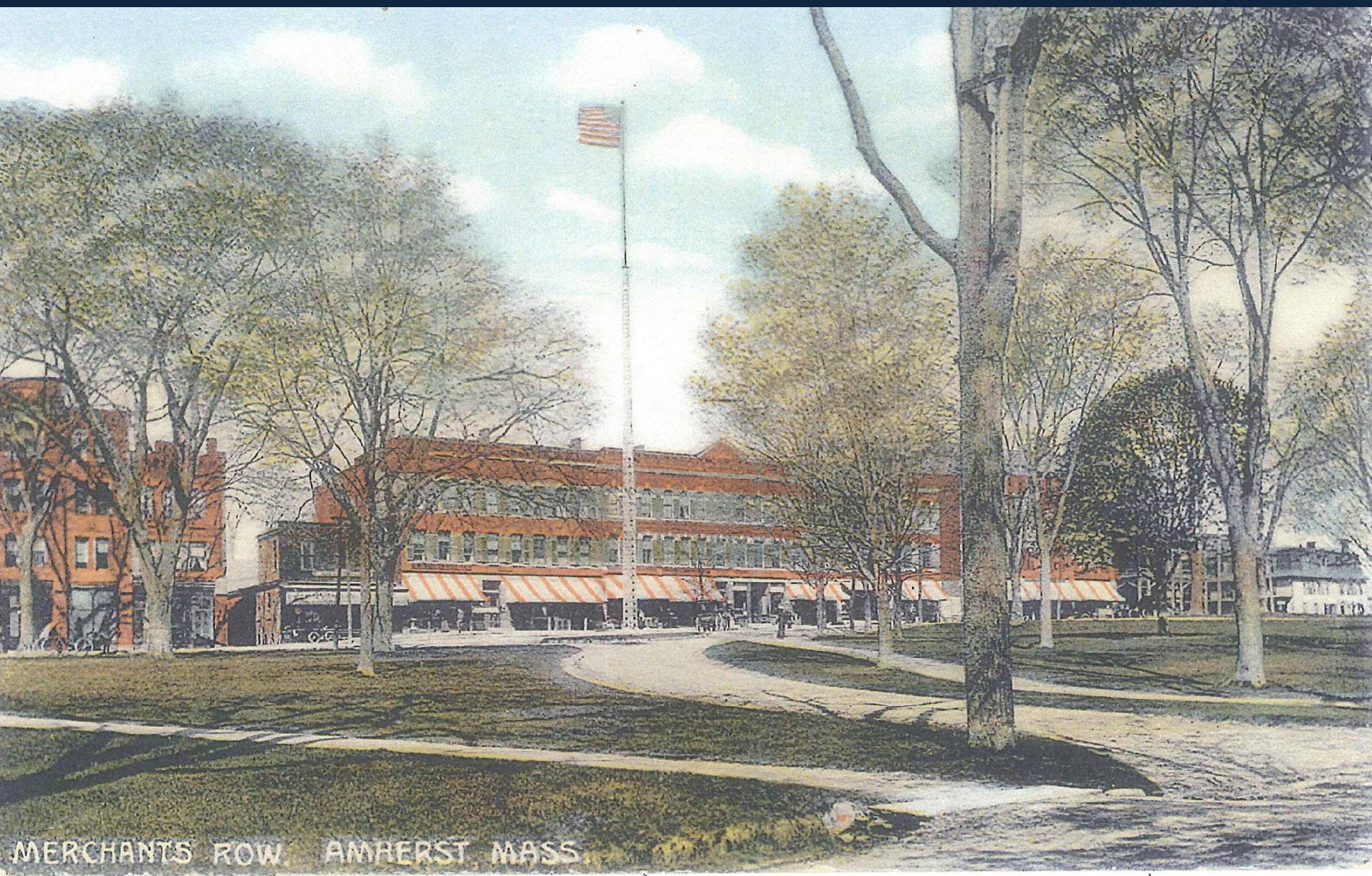
Ca. 1860 Map-Town Common





1874 Frederick Law Olmsted Design of Town Common





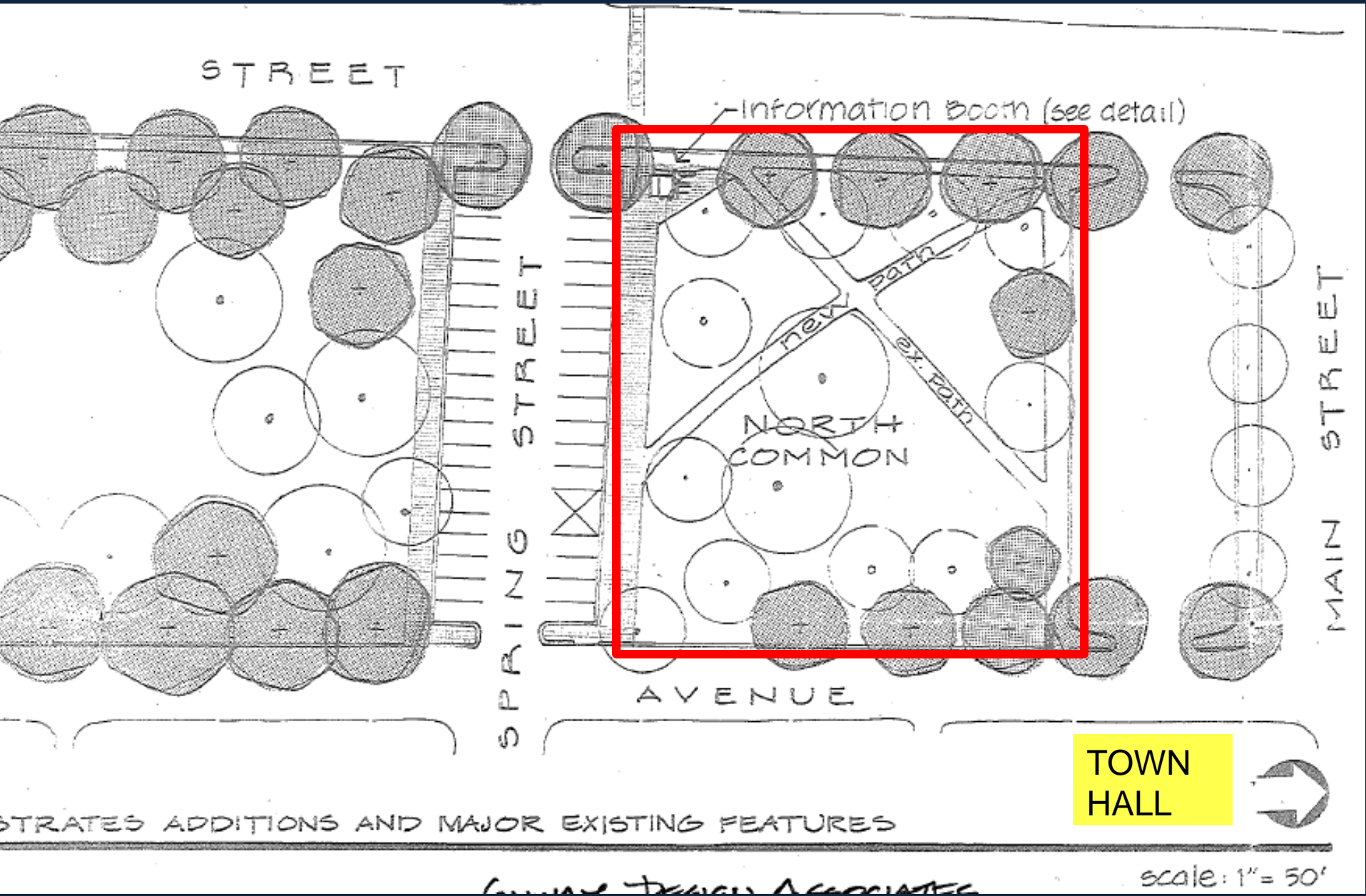
MERCHANTS ROW AMHERST, MASS.

The Common, Amherst, Mass.





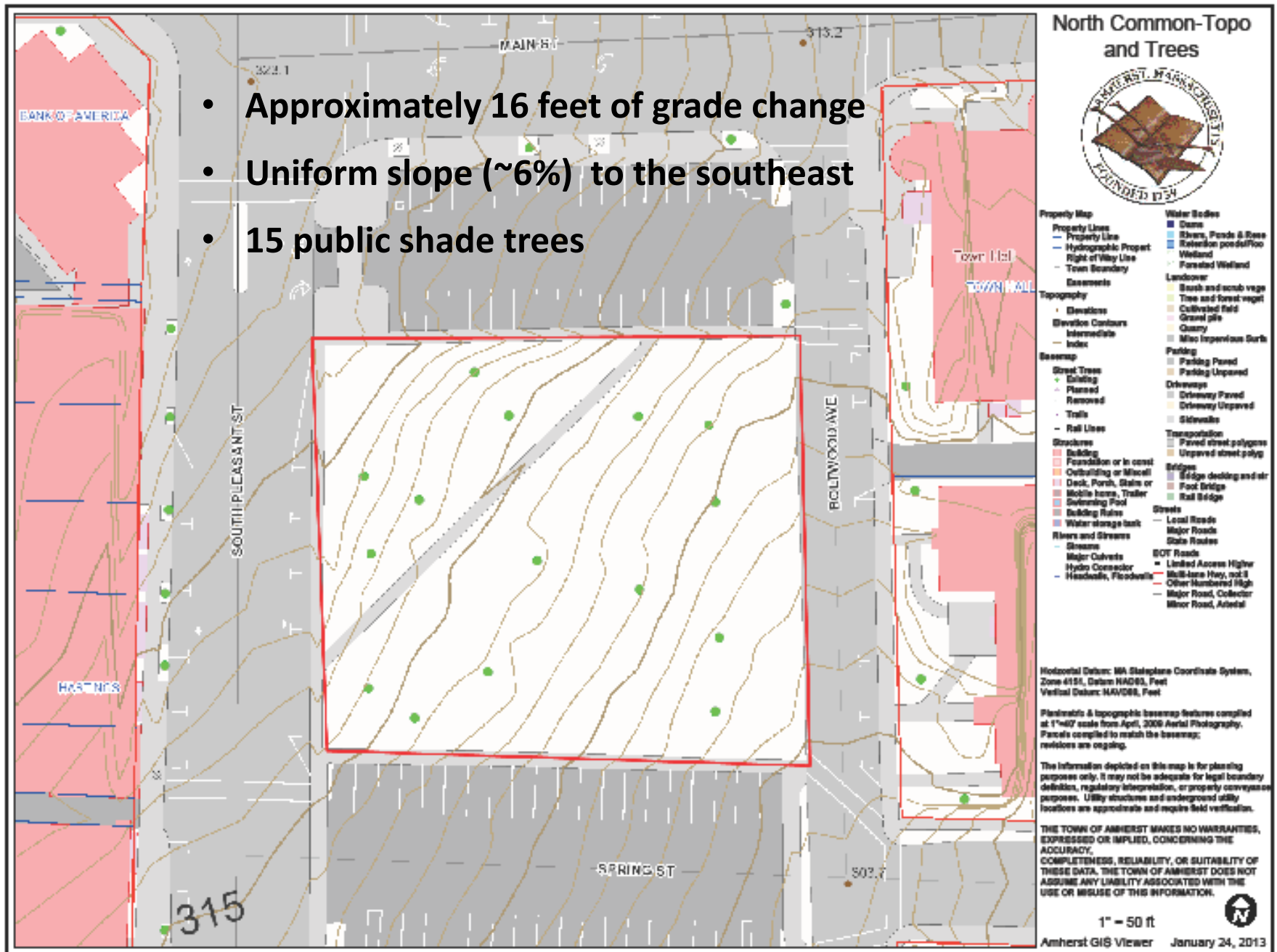
1986 Conway School of Design—Plan for Town Common



Existing Conditions

- Important space for Town Center
 - Used for weekly and monthly events and for special occasions
 - Surrounded by local businesses
- Public shade trees
- Exposed tree roots and compacted soil
- Significant areas lacking turf and grass
- Poor drainage





- Approximately 16 feet of grade change
- Uniform slope (~6%) to the southeast
- 15 public shade trees

Existing Conditions

- Limited pedestrian paths, seating, lighting and gathering spaces
- Lack of accessibility



Existing Conditions

- High pedestrian use, both on paths and on informal paths
- significant areas lacking turf and grass
- Poor drainage



Existing Conditions

- Deteriorating tree boxes
- Poor drainage

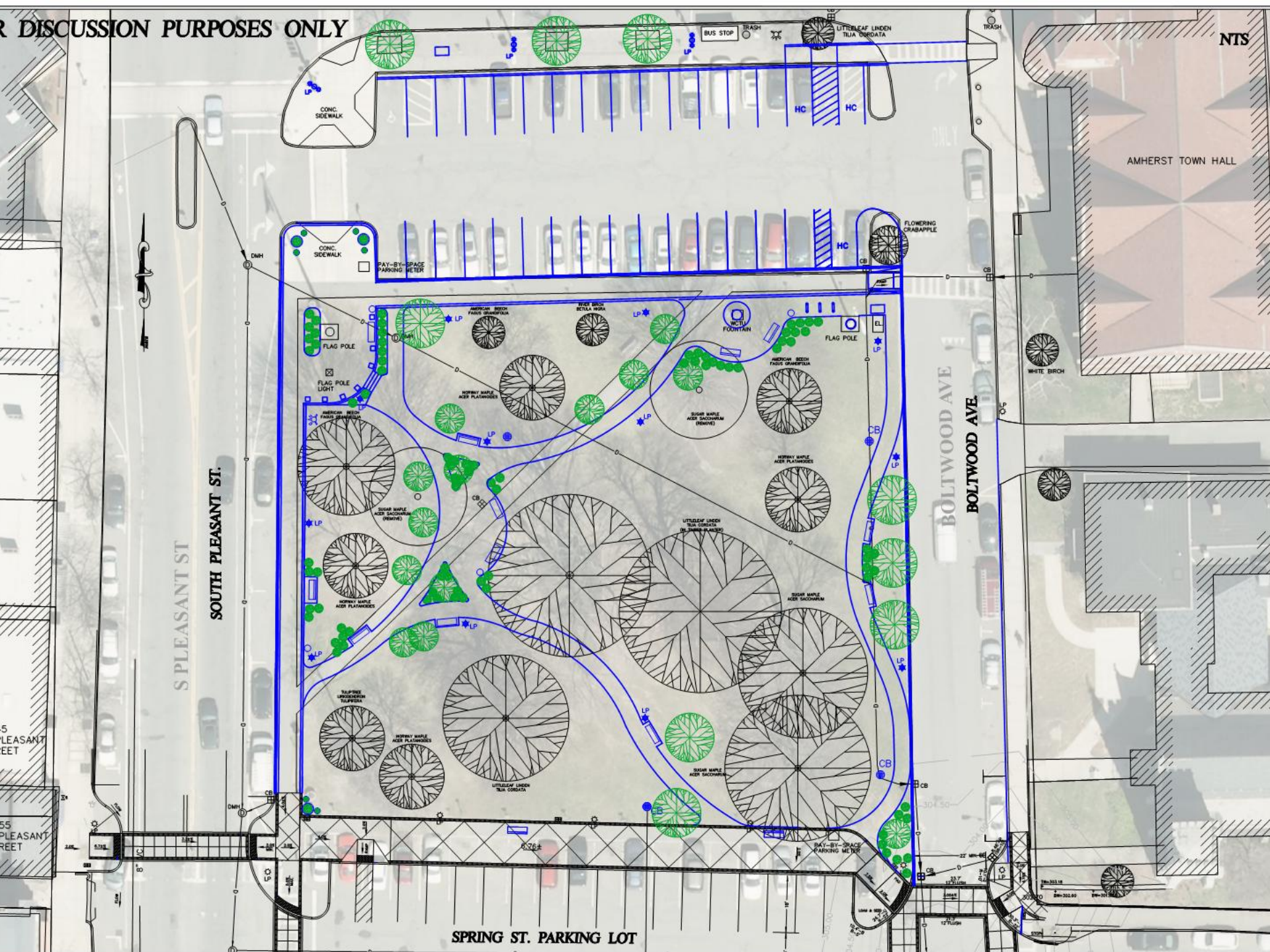


Concept Considerations

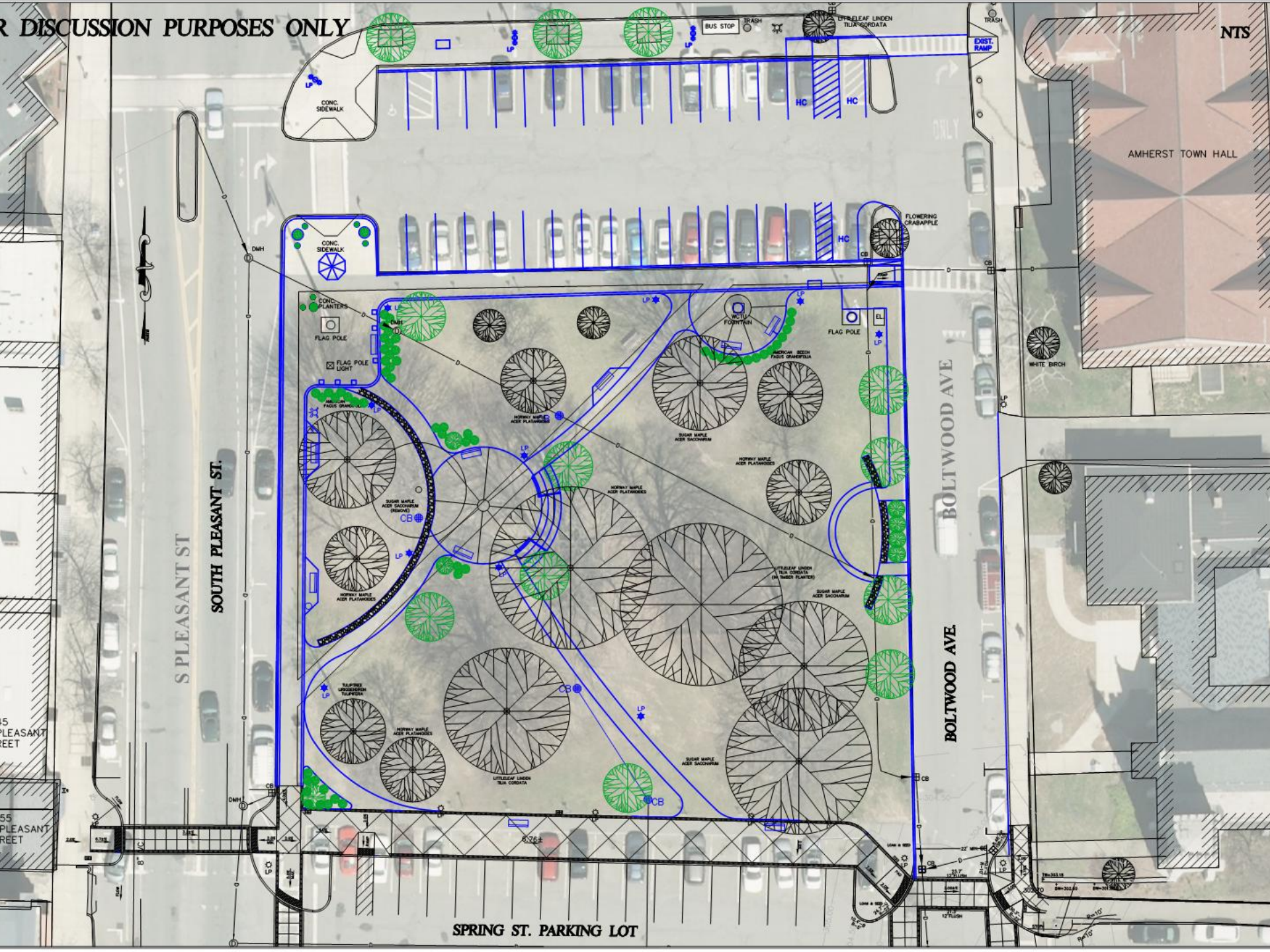
- Based on site assessment and past comments
- A key downtown space
- Used year-round
- An urban setting
- Preserve its historic character
- Pedestrians
- Accessibility and safety
- Amenities such as seating and lighting
- Drainage
- Gathering spaces



FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY



FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY



NTS

AMHERST TOWN HALL

S PLEASANT ST.
SOUTH PLEASANT ST.

BOLTWOOD AVE.
BOLTWOOD AVE.

SPRING ST. PARKING LOT

PARC Grant Program

- State-sponsored grant program through the Division of Conservation Services in the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
- Helps assist communities with acquiring, developing and rehabilitating land for parks and other outdoor recreation purposes, as well as historic preservation
- Reimbursement grant—Town pays for total project cost and is reimbursed 70%